

Shaker Church Family Dairy and Weave Shop
(Shaker Church Family Sisters' Shop (Second))
S. side of U. S. Rt. 20 near intersection
with State Rt. 41, 5 mi. W. of Pittsfield
Hancock
Berkshire County
Massachusetts

HABS No. MASS-726

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

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SHAKER CHURCH FAMILY DAIRY AND WEAVE SHOP HABS No. MASS-726
(SHAKER CHURCH FAMILY SISTERS' SHOP (SECOND))

Location: South side of U.S. Rt. 20 near intersection with
State Rt. 41, 5 miles west of Pittsfield, Hancock,
Berkshire County, Massachusetts

Present Owner
and Occupant: Shaker Community, Inc., Hancock, Massachusetts

Present Use: Exhibit area for materials on the medicinal herb,
garden seed, spinning and weaving industries

Statement of
Significance: This building is one of the earliest in the
Community.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: Unknown; possibly early 1800's.
2. Architect: None.
3. Original and subsequent owners: United Society of
Believers in Christ's Second Appearing; Shaker
Community, Inc.
4. Builder, suppliers, etc.: Unknown. Elder William
Deming may have been the supervising joiner and mason;
or it may have been Daniel Goodrich, Sr. or his son
Daniel Goodrich, Jr. who had charge of the temporal
concerns in the early years of this society.
5. Original plans, construction, etc.: It seems that
the original building was in the nature of a storage
building or barn as the framing was rough and the
details cruder than would be expected in a more
finished building. The area of the original building
was approximately two-thirds the area of the present
first floor. The original building was one-and-a-half
stories. It is doubtful that this building originally
housed the spinning and weaving industry. In 1848,
when David Lamson wrote about the Hancock Church Family,
he mentions three houses which once stood to the west of
the brick dwelling house. One of them, he writes, "is
designed as the sisters' workshop; where their sewing,
and some of their spinning and weaving are done." This
building was taken down by the Shakers in the 1940's.
(Photographs are available from Shaker Community, Inc.)
West of this "sisters' workshop" there originally stood
the other two houses, one a brethren's "nurse shop"

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and the other a sisters' "nurse shop." For convenience, we have called the dairy and weave shop the sisters' shop because it is used chiefly as an exhibition area for sisters' industries, complementing the brethren's shop opposite it, which is being prepared as an area to show materials relating to the brethren's industries. The last uses that the Shakers themselves made of the building were weaving, dairying, and cheese making. (The Historic American Buildings Survey refers to this building by its Shaker name, not its present exhibition name.)

6. Alterations and additions: The additions to the building are of greater area than the original. In addition to approximately ten feet added to the south, the full width of the building, a full second story and attic area were added.

B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Structure:

None.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Old views: Several early views are now the property of Shaker Community, Inc.

2. Bibliography:

Chiefly oral tradition from Shaker sources.

Lamson, David. Two Year's Experience Among the Shakers.
West Boylston, 1848, p. 16.

Taylor, Bayard. At Home and Abroad: A Sketch-book of Life, Scenery and Men. New York and London, 1862, pp. 333-335.

3. Sources not yet investigated: Official Hancock Church records - when located.

Prepared by Edward Deming Andrews
Curator
Shaker Community, Inc.
March 22, 1962
(Section A, #5+6 by Terry
Hallock, Architect)

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION:

A. Description of Exterior:

1. Foundations: The original building's stone foundation

is the only area fully excavated.

2. Structural system, framing: The construction is a typical joist and beam type. The building underwent extensive alteration when the south wing and second and third floors were added. However, much of the original building frame remains and is incorporated into the final framing system. Details of framing members of the original building were re-used as floor joists in the more recent construction.
3. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: There are two types of doors, both are four panel, one raised and the other flat panel. There are stone steps to entrances with wrought iron rails.
 - b. Windows and shutters: The windows are eight-over-eight lights.

Prepared by Terry Hallock
Architect
Shaker Community, Inc.
1962

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

The information in this report is incomplete, but has been included in the Historic American Buildings Survey's collection because of the special knowledge of the authors. Edward Deming Andrews, a notable author on Shaker history, religion, and arts, compiled the historical data. The restoration architect of the Hancock Shaker community, Terry Hallock, supplied the architectural data. June, 1975.